

Report on Session 5: Land, Information and Power

Rapporteur: Clarissa Fourie

A number of additional points were raised namely:-

1. When discussing information, land and power, it was not enough to note that women only owned 1 percent of the land, but that in general 90 percent of the people owned only 1 percent of the land. That is, sustainable development was not possible without a redistribution of land. Such redistribution, through the formalization of existing informal rights and building inclusive societies, is critical for sustainable development.
2. When discussing native land titles in Australia it was stated that processes had to be set up to manage overlapping and co-existing rights, both between native rights claimants and between native rights claimants and lease holders. The process firstly included the encouragement of conflict management and mediation processes as a way forward rather than court processes as the first step. It also encouraged native land claimants to bring forward joint claims to be adjudicated. Prior to negotiations the exact type of claims with respect to land use had to be ascertained. This made it possible to decide whether the lease conditions extinguished the native title conditions, as under law native, title was extinguished by registered rights. Stakeholders were also encouraged to work out detailed conditions to be registered in the native land titles registry, as a form of contract, to prevent later disputes over hunting rights, fires, closure of gates, land use, access to the land and so on. The legal structure for this is in place and it is hoped that the parties will start to flesh this out, which in turn will feed back into the legal structure.
3. The issue of interoperability of systems was raised in relation to planning information requirements for local authorities, suggesting that some form of state level technical policy and management could improve interoperability both for planning and cadastral information. It was indicated that in New South Wales partnerships between the state, local authorities and the private sector were under negotiation, linked to quality assurance approaches, to build this type of interoperability.
4. It was suggested that the technical and commercial systems were moving at an enormous pace while the institutions were proceeding at a much slower pace in the adoption of technical and commercial change and that this would have to change in the future.
5. Developing countries were at different phases of development and only a certain number of them presently could benefit from a property infrastructure. Other countries might benefit from an information infrastructure, as decision-makers required information, and might approve funding for information infrastructures which they would not approve for property infrastructures. Also, in developed countries property and accessible information about property might well build new forms of civil society.
6. Conventionally loans or grants have not been available for the development of a national spatial data infrastructure. There are now a number of countries presently obtaining loans for this infrastructure. However, with respect to donors, they tend to

be sector based and this makes it very difficult to build such an infrastructure. In this situation, donor coordination is important.